Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
26th November 1872.

No. 202. Read the following letter from the Acting Collector of the Godavery District, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George, dated Cocanada, 4th November 1872, No. 45 :—

I HAVE the honour to forward Mr. Pearse's letter on the late floods at Ellore.

2. There was very heavy rain during the first part of September, and large quantities of water were brought down by the Tammileru. This water could not at first find its way into the canal, until Lieutenant Dorward opened the bank, and so the water escaped. There was some damage by this flood, but not much.

3. The second flood occurred on the 5th of October: the rain was very heavy the night before: the tanks were already full, so they burst; and the river brought down a quantity of water, which inundated a great part of the town. This flood caused a good deal of damage: several houses were destroyed and cattle lost, but no one, as far as I can hear, has lost his life. There have been some 500 houses destroyed, as Mr. Pearse says: the Police estimated the number at 1,000, but I think Mr. Pearse has had better means of judging. These houses were not carried away by the rush of water, for there seems not to have been much violent motion in the water; but the water quietly spread itself out and entered the houses. Those built of mud, which at Ellore contains a great deal of salt, soon fell away by the action of the rain, and the water standing round and in them. The houses were of no great value, and can easily be rebuilt, and they contained but very little property. The Police Inspector and the Channel Superintendent opened the canal on both sides, and let the water out into the Colair Lake. The people left houseless were provided for by the Municipal Commission.

4. I may add that I have read the remarks of the Police Inspector on the conduct of the Tahsildar, as well as what Mr. Pearse says in his letter. I have also seen the Tahsildar, and from what he has told me I do not think he is deserving of any blame.

5. Mr. Pearse's letter was accompanied by one from the Range Officer (copy is herewith sent), in which he proposes to make a number of tanks along the sides of the river, and thus draw off a quantity of the water. This will, at all events, take off some of the water that comes down the river.

6. The only sum spent by me was Rs. 25, which was the expense incurred by the Police Inspector for cutting the bank of the canal to let the water escape. I request sanction for this.

7. The Municipal Commission have spent about Rs. 250 in taking care of those who could not take care of themselves. The Comaties (merchants) subscribed something for the same purpose.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From E. L. PEARSE, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to the Acting Collector of the Godavery District, dated Ellore, 28th October 1872, No. 276.

I HAVE the honour to report upon the recent floods in Ellore.

2. In August the rainfall amounted to about 7¼ inches, the heaviest rain being at the end of the month. In the first half of September it was moderate, but on the 16th there was a downpour of 7·9 inches. This was the first flood referred to in the Government telegram of which you

sent me a copy. By it the tanks were filled, and the soil was saturated, but it did no immediate harm in Ellore beyond making a swamp of the parade ground and inundating my house, which stands very low. This flood was caused by more water coming down the eastern branch of the Tammileru than could readily be passed off by the sluice into the canal and by the small channel running parallel to the canal, and by its consequently rolling back over the adjacent land. Lieutenant A. R. F. Dorward afforded an outlet to the water by breaching the south bund of the canal, and it all passed away in about twenty-four hours.

3. The second and great flood was caused by the rain of the night of the 4th and 5th instant. In this town it measured 8½ inches, and it was simultaneously heavy over a large tract of country, including, I believe, the whole basin of the Tammileru. The innumerable tanks with which this space is dotted having previously been filled now burst, and added their contents to the actual down-pour and to the volume of the river. Thus the previous flood, harmless in itself, was the indirect cause of most of the harm of this.

4. Above Ellore the river divides into two branches of which the greater flows past the west, and the smaller past the east of the town. The canal is a little above the level of the western branch, and even with that of the eastern; and in ordinary times the water of the former passes on its way to Coléru under the low aqueduct by which the canal crosses it, and that of the latter is carried off by a small side channel. But after moderate rain the latter is permitted to flow across the bed of the canal, and after heavy rains the former also flows over instead of under it. On the present occasion both combined filled the canal to such an extent that it overflowed the whole north-east part of the town from its point of junction with the eastern branch. In addition to this the river was overflowing its banks in all directions, both from above and below the point of bifurcation.

5. Judging from the water-marks in my house the water was two feet higher than on the former occasion. It covered the whole parade ground and flowed into the Police Hospital and public bungalow and over the verandahs, but not into the rooms of the Cutcherry and Pension Pay Office. The whole native town north of the canal was inundated, including the Pensioners' lines, the Ganji ('Guns') Bazaar, and Tangellamudi, on the east bank of the river. About 1,300 houses were entered by the water, of which about 500 of the poorest sort have collapsed in consequence of the combined action of the flood and the rain. The Roman Catholic Chapel is utterly ruined, and the English Church was flooded and suffered some damage. The high road was cut in one place by the rush of the water, and subsequently two more cuts had to be made to allow the water to pass.

6. I was absent from Ellore at the time. Mr. Prendergast, the Inspector of Police, took the lead in ordering and executing the necessary remedial measures. He cut breaches in both the banks of the canal and in the road, thereby enabling the water to flow off as quickly as was possible under the circumstances. He exerted himself in procuring accommodation for the unhoused people in chuttrums and other buildings, and even received into his own house as many as it would hold. His conduct has been highly appreciated by the towns' people and the Municipal Commissioners; I hope it will be the same in higher quarters.

7. The Rev. Mr. Padfield lost no time in convening a meeting of Municipal Commissioners, which voted money and formed a Committee (which Mr. Prendergast was invited to join) for the relief of those rendered temporarily destitute. Rs. 250 were spent in this way.

8. The Tahsildar was in Ellore at the time, but being on leave he abstained entirely from rendering any assistance, even in his capacity of Municipal Commissioner. I have not seen him, as he has now left the town; but I trust he will be able to give some good reason for his inaction. The Taluq Sheristadar, who was Acting Tahsildar, gave his countenance to Mr. Prendergast's exertions. He refused, however, to pay out of the treasury for the labour employed in cutting the canal banks. The sum was Rs. 25, and Mr. Prendergast himself paid it; when I subsequently offered to reimburse him, he informed me that he had already written to his Superintendent on the subject.

9. I need hardly say that by far the greatest loser by the flood is the Government. The injury to the tanks and canal, especially to the Kistna portion of the canal, puts all the other losses in the shade. I have received a letter from the Zemindarnis of Sanivarapeta, stating that the crops, especially the dry crops of their estate, have suffered greatly, and urging claims to a remission of peishcush. These claims they support by alleging that the flood was to a great extent caused by the fact of the canal preventing the river from flowing freely along its course to Coléru. A similar letter from the Zemindarnis of Tangellamudi states that their estate has also suffered greatly. But I am inclined to think that, except in the dry crops, there will be no great loss. The wet crops, so far as I have been able to observe personally, and from what I have heard, are none the worse for their temporary submersion, and the tanks can all be mended before their services are required again. But I must except the crops which have been inundated by the swelling of Coléru, and those silted over by the sand brought down by the river. These are really destroyed. The level of Coléru was raised 3½ feet, and it swamped a margin of from 2 to 4 miles wide around its normal bed. With regard to the plea that the flood was partially due to the canal embankment, it must be remarked that its influence in throwing back the water would only extend to a very short distance along the north side of the canal, and that this is probably more than compensated on the south side where the water was made to run in streams instead of spreading itself out.

10. In the town of Ellore the worst damage was to cattle and sheep. Happily there was no loss of human life. The large majority of the houses that were inundated were speedily re-occupied by their owners. As to the rest, those whose houses were destroyed, the Sanivarapeta family has generously given up a large brahmin chuttrum to the use of the Mussalmans from the pensioners' lines, a number of pariahs have been allowed to settle in the varandahs of the offices on the parade ground, and others have erected palmyra leaf sheds on or near the sites of their old huts. I am very unwilling that these last-named should be allowed to build again in the same place. It is the point at which the northern or Chintalapúdi road joins the grand trunk road, and ought to be kept at least respectable. The pensioners have not applied for any assistance, and Major Marshall told me, in conversation, that he did not think they required any; but I think they might at least be allowed to take palmyra leaves from Government waste, free of expense, to help them in rebuilding. The pariahs, I think, want no help. They have most of their materials, and to rebuild will only cost them two or three days' labour, which they will bestow whenever it is convenient to them.

11. In conclusion, I have the honour to state that I entirely coincide in the opinion expressed in the enclosed letter from Lieutenant J. F. Dorward. I am of course unable to estimate the cost and profits of the works therein proposed, but whenever the calculation is made the prevention of a repetition of the recent calamity will be perhaps the most important item to be considered. One part of the scheme, known as the Jánampéta project, has been for some time in contemplation, but although approved by local officers both of our own and the Public Works Department, it is strongly opposed by the Zemindari family, on the ground that it would deprive them of the control of the water. The objection is purely one of sentiment, but I hope it will be overcome by the consideration of the present losses and future benefits both to themselves and their neighbours.

From Lieutenant J. F. DORWARD, R.E., in charge of No. 4 Range, Godavery District, to the Head Assistant Collector of Godavery District, dated Ellore, 15th October 1872, No. 311.

You are aware of the devastation which has lately been occasioned by the unusually high freshes in the Tammileru. The only way to control these floods effectually would be by the construction of storage reservoirs at different points of the river's course, and I have the honour to inquire whether the Zemindars, whose estates are liable to injury, and the inhabitants of Ellore who have lately suffered so much, would be willing to contribute towards the cost of these works. The water stored up would, of course, be available for the irrigation of a country now poorly cultivated, and the proposed reservoirs would be in every way beneficial to the district.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
26th November 1872.

No. 203. ORDER THEREON, 26th November 1872, No. 1,621.

Miscellaneous.

G. O., 4th November 1872, No. 1,523.

His letter of the 17th October last, No. 41, not being in sufficient detail, the Collector was desired to report more fully as to the damage sustained by the town of Ellore from the late floods.

2. It appears that the first flood, on the 16th September, caused no immediate harm. Lieutenant Dorward, R.E., promptly breached the south bund of the canal, and so within twenty-four hours carried off the overflow from the river.

3. Meanwhile, however, the numerous tanks in the basin of the river were filled to the brim, and burst their banks immediately the rains of the 5th October supervened, "adding their contents to the actual down-pour and to the volume of the river." On that occasion the water was 2 feet higher than in the September floods; the whole Native town north of the canal was inundated. About 1,300 houses were entered by the water, of which about 500 (not 1,000 as stated in the Police reports) collapsed in ruin. That there was no loss of life and that in numerous cases the materials for rebuilding exist is attributable to the absence of a *rush* of water: "There seems not to have been much violent motion in it; it quietly spread itself out and entered the houses." The Head Assistant Collector was absent, and fresh testimony is borne to the praiseworthy and energetic conduct of Mr. Prendergast, Inspector of Police, who took the lead in doing what was necessary. He further exerted himself in procuring accommodation for the destitute, for whose immediate relief it is gratifying to learn that the Municipal Commissioners of the town voted a grant of Rs. 250. The Tahsildar was on leave, but present at the time: his conduct is impugned by the Head Assistant, but the Collector has satisfied himself that he is not deserving of any blame. The sum (Rs. 25) disbursed by Mr. Prendergast to the workmen engaged in cutting the canal-bank should be disbursed to that officer.

4. Lieutenant Dorward's scheme for mitigating the effects of similar floods in future will be considered by Government in the proper department, when submitted through the usual channels.

5. It is observed, in conclusion, that by an order in the Public Department, 20th instant, No. 1,280, special reports have been called for on the alleged indifference and apathy of the Tahsildar and Sheristadar on the occasion, and as to the absence of any Engineer Officer both at the time and for "more than a week after."

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of the Godavery District.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Accountant-General.
,, the Public Works Department.
,, the Public Department.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Encl 1 in No 276

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Godavery District

Ad Asst Collector's Office

Ellore 28th October 1872.

From D. L. Pearse Esquire
Ag Ad Assistant Collector

To W. S. Fowler Esquire
Ag Collector of the Godavery
District

Sir,

I have the honour to report upon the recent floods in Ellore.

2. In August the rain fall amounted to about 7¼ inches, the heaviest rain being at the end of the month. In the first half of September it was moderate, but on the 16th there was a down-pour of 7·9 inches. This was the first flood referred to in the Government telegram of which you sent me a copy. By it the tanks were filled and the soil was saturated

but it did no immediate harm in Ellore beyond making of a swamp of the Parade Ground, and inundating my house, which stands very low. This flood was caused by more water coming down the Eastern branch of the Tammilèru than could readily be passed off by the sluices into the canal & by the small channel running parallel to the Canal, & by its consequently rolling back over the adjacent land. Lieut. A.R.T. Dorward afforded an outlet to the water by breaching the South bund of the Canal, and it all passed away in about 24 hours.

3. The second and great flood was caused by the rain of the night of the 4th & 5th Instant. In this town it measured 8½ inches, and it was simultaneously heavy over a large tract of country, including, I believe, the whole basin of the Tammilèru. The immmerable tanks with which this space is dotted, having previously been filled, now burst, and added their contents to the actual down-pour, and to the volume of the river. Thus the previous flood, harmless in itself, was the indirect cause of most of the harm of this.

4. Above Ellore the river divides into two branches of which the greater flows just the west, & the smaller past the East of the Town. The canal is a little above the level of the western branch & even with that of the

Eastern; and in ordinary times the
water of the former passes on its
way to Colerun under the low
Aqueduct by which the canal crosses
it, and that of the latter is carried
off by a small size channel.
But after moderate rain the latter
is permitted to flow across the bed
of the canal, and after heavy rains
the former also flows over instead
of under it. On the present occasion
both combined filled the Canal
to such an extent that it overflowed
the whole N.E. part of the town,
from its point of junction with
the Eastern branch. In addition
to this the river was overflowing
its banks in all directions
both from above and below
the point of bifurcation.

the Colair Lake

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Sheet

5. Judging from the water marks
in my house, the water was 2 feet
higher than on the former occasions.
It covered the whole parade
ground & flowed into the Police
hospital & Public Bungalow &
over the verandas but not into the
rooms of the Cutcherry & Pension
Duty Office. The whole native
town North of the Canal was
inundated, including the Pensioners
lines, the Gangi (Gunni) Bazaar, and
Tangellamudi, on the East bank
of the river. About 1300 houses
were entered by the water, of
which about 500 of the poorest
sort have collapsed in conse-
quence of the combined action of
the flood & the rain. The Roman

Catholic Chapel is utterly ruined,
and the English Church was
flooded and ~~its roof suffered some~~
~~greatly~~ damage ~~to~~. The High
Road was cut in ~~two~~ places by
the rush of the water, and subsequently two
temporary cuts had to be made to allow the water to pass.

6. I was absent from Elliot
at the time. Mr Prendergast
the Inspector of Police took the
lead in ordering and executing
the necessary remedial measures.
Several breaches in both the banks
of the Canal and in the road
thereby enabling the
water to flow off as quickly as
was possible under the circumstances
He exerted himself in procuring
accommodation for the unhoused
people in Chattrams & other buildings,
and even received into his own
house as many as it would hold.

His conduct has been highly
appreciated by the towns people
and the Municipal Commissioners.
I hope it will be the same in higher
quarters.

7. The Revd Mr. Padfield
lost no time in convening a meeting
of Municipal Commissioners
which voted money and formed
a Committee (which Mr Prendergast
was invited to join) for the
relief of those rendered
temporarily destitute. Rs. 250
were spent in this way.

8. The Tahsildar was in
Elliot at the time, but being on
leave, he abstained entirely by
from rendering any assistance,
even in his capacity of Municipal
Commissioner. I have not seen him,

as he has now left the town; but I trust he will be able to give some good reason for his inaction. The Taluk Sheristadar, who was acting Tahsildar, gave his countenance to Mr Prendergast's exertions. He refused however to pay out of the Treasury for the labour employed in cutting the canal banks. The sum was Rs 25, and Mr Prendergast himself paid it; when I subsequently offered to reimburse him, he informed me that he had already written to his Superintendent on the subject.

9. I need hardly say that by far the greatest loser by the flood is the Government. The injury to the Tanks and canal, especially to the Kistna portion of the canal, puts all the other losses in the shade. I have received a letter from the Zamindar of Sanivarapéta, stating that the crops, especially the Dry crops

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of their Estate have suffered greatly, and urging claims to a remission of Peshkash. These claims they support by alleging that the flood was to a great extent caused by the fact of the canal preventing the river from flowing freely along its course to Colérn. A similar letter from the Zamindar of Jangallamudi states that their Estate has also suffered greatly. But I am inclined to think that, except in the dry crops, there will be no great loss. The wet crops, so far as I have been able to observe personally, and from what I have heard, are none the worse for their temporary submersion; and the tanks can all be mended before their services are required again. But I must except the crops which have been inundated by the swelling of Colérn, and those silted over by the sand brought down by the river. These are really destroyed.

The level of Colèru was raised 3½ feet, and it swamped a margin of from 2 to 4 miles wide around its normal bed. With regard to the plea that the flood was partially due to the canal embankment, it must be remarked that its influence in throwing back the water would only extend to a very short distance along the North side of the Canal, and that this is probably more than compensated on the South side, where the water was made to run in streams instead of spreading itself out.

10. In the Town of Elloor the worst damage was to cattle & sheep. Happily there was no loss of human life. The large majority of the houses that were inundated were speedily re occupied by their owners. As to the rest, those whose houses were destroyed

the Samivanapeta family has generously given up a large brahman Chattram to the use of the Mussalmans from the Pensioner's lines, a number of pariahs have been allowed to settle in the Varandahs of the Offices on the Parade ground, and others have erected palmyra leaf sheds in or near the sites of their old huts: I am very unwilling that these last named should be allowed to build again in the same place. It is the point at which the Northern or Chintalapudi road joins the Grand Trunk Road, and ought to be kept at least respectable. The Pensioners have not applied for any assistance and Major Marshall told me in conversation that he did not think they required any; but I think they might at least be allowed to take palmyra leaves from Government waste free of expense to help them in rebuilding. The pariahs I think

want no help. They have most of their materials, and to rebuild will only cost them two or three days' labour, which they will bestow whenever it is convenient to them.

11. In conclusion I have the honour to state that I entirely coincide in the opinion expressed in the enclosed letter from Lieut J. J. Dorward. I am of course unable to estimate the cost and profits of the works therein proposed, but whenever the calculation is made, the prevention of a repetition of the recent calamity will be perhaps the most important item to be considered. One part of the scheme, known as the Sánampéta project, has been for some time in contemplation, but although approved by local officers both of our own and the Public works department, it is

strongly opposed by the Zamindarí family, on the ground that it would deprive them of the control of the water. The objection is purely one of sentiment, but I hope it will be over come by the consideration of the present losses and future benifits both to themselves & their neighbours.

I have the honour to be
Sir
Your Most Obedt Servant
A Russell
Ag Asstt Collector

Compd N Pakkanoor

1872.

From The Actg Nd Asst Collector
Godaverry District

To The Actg Collector
Godaverry Dt
dated 28th October 1872
Rec'd No 2276.
Enclosure

Reporting upon the
recent floods in
Ellore

—

1872 Dec 4th
In addn to former
Collector Godaverry Dt
To the Secretary to Govt
Revenue Dept
Dated 4 Nov 1872
Rec'd
No 45. Rec. 3657

Head Asst Collectors
report on the floods
in Ellore

G. O No 1621 of 26 Nov
1872

1872 Rec'd

Inclosure from the
Collector Godavery Dt
To the Secretary to Govt
Revenue Dept

Dated 4 Nov. 72
Rec'd
No 45. Rev. 3657/72

Copy of the Executive
Engineer's letter to the
Acting Asst Collector

G. O. No 1621. of 26 Nov
1872

Revenue
1872 Dclk
No 3651.
From
The Collector
Gadaney Dr
To The Secretary to Govt
Revenue Dept.

Dated 4 Nov 72
Rec'd 12th "
No 45.
Encls 2
Nos

Forwarding letter
Pearse's letter on the
late floods at Illore

S. O. No 1621 - 27 Nov/72

No 202

Clk Nov/72. R 22d Nov/72

27th Nov. 1872.

No. 1624

Letter from Colr Ristow &c
No 45 dy 4th Nov/72.

His letter of the 17th Oct last No 41
not being sufficient detail, the
Colr was desired to report more fully
as to the damage sustained by the
town of Illore from the late floods.

2. It appears that the 1st flood, on the
18th Sept. caused no immediate
harm. Lt Dowsett R.E. promptly
breached the South bund of the Canal
and so within 24 hours carried off
the overflow from the river.

3. Meanwhile, however, the numerous
tanks in the basin of the river were
filled to the brim, and most their
banks immediately the rains of the
5th October supervened, "adding
their contents to the actual discon-
-tents & to the volume of the river".
On that occasion the water was 2 feet
higher than in the September floods; the
whole Native town N. of the canal
was inundated. About 1800 houses
were entered by the water, of which about
500 (not 1000 as stated in the
Police Reports) collapsed in ruin.
Yes: and the should ascertain why no

Officers of P.W.D. Land
are heard of accor to
place during, & specia
work after, to record
evidence of flood.

That there was no loss of life
and that in numerous cases the
materials for rebuilding exists is
attributable to the absence of a rush of
water - "There seems not to have been
"much violent motion in it; it
"quietly spread itself out and entered
"the houses" - The Head Asst Collr was
absent, and fresh testimony is borne
to the praiseworthy & energetic conduct
of Mr Vanderzee, Inspector of Police,
who took the lead in doing what was
necessary. He has exerted himself
in procuring accommodation for the
destitute, for whose immediate
relief it is gratifying to learn that
the Municipal Commissioners of
the Town voted a grant of £50 Rs.
The Tahsildar was on leave but
present at the time: his conduct
is impugned by the Head Asst, but
the Collr has satisfied himself that
he is not deserving of any blame.
The dam (Rs 25) distrained by Mr
Vanderzee to be condemned as part
in enabling the canal bank to be
distrained to that officer.
4. Mr Howard's scheme for mitigating
the effects of similar floods in
future will be considered by Govt
in the proper department, when
submitted through the usual channels.

5. It is observed in Pg - 14/11 -
Conclusion that by an order
in the Public Dept 20th inst No 1260
special reports have been called for
on the alleged indifference & apathy
of the Tahsildar & Sanitation
on the occasion, & as to the absence
of any Engineer Officer from the
time and for "more than a week
after" -

Pg - 22/11 -

1 To the Collr of the Godavary DG dec 28 Nov/72
14 " Board of Revenue — " —
6 " Accountant — " —
21 " Public Works Dept " —
5 " Public Dept " —

80

No 202-203

Ellore Roads

for their Reports thereon